AIR POUCH AUG 11 [redacted]
PRIORITY

...OFFICIAL USE ONLY...
(Security Classification)

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

DEPT. OF STATE REVIEWED BY EC DATE 3/20/84 NLE 61/8-955

FROM: AMEMBASSY HELSINKI DESP. NO. 94

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON DATE August 9, 1955

REF

RDS ☐ XRS ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFY ☐ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE OVER 6 P.1

EUR INDEX

For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.
	EUR 5	INFO Emb/C
	REC'D 8/15	OTHER CINCEUR Army 3 Navy 3 AIR 3 USIA 10

PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

SUBJECT: Diet Speaker Fagerholm's Remarks on Relations with the USSR

There is enclosed a translation of certain remarks on Finland's relations with the USSR which were included in a speech by Diet Speaker K.-A. Fagerholm at Rovaniemi on August 7. In brief, Fagerholm said that Finns in general are banking on the sincerity of the assurances of Soviet leaders that differing social systems can live side by side in peace and can collaborate; that Finns prefer their own type of democracy and intend to maintain it; that they do not doubt that the people of the Soviet Union may find their own system suitable and successful, however inacceptable it might be for Finns; and that on this basis all important sectors of Finnish opinion (and by no means only the SKDL) intend to work for good relations with the Soviet Union.

These statements were naturally attacked in Communist "Työkansa Sanomat" on August 9. The paper claimed that what Fagerholm said on this occasion was in contradiction to his earlier expressions of favor for the "NATO-dominated Nordic Council", and that therefore what he now said was insincere. The Communist paper was naturally incensed at Fagerholm's implied reference to the SKDL as not being among the parties and groups within Finnish society which "are really of some significance".

Fagerholm's remarks, however, presumably represent a sober formulation of an attitude toward the Soviet Union capable of appealing to the majority of Finnish voters. The alarm of "Työkansan Sanomat" may arise not so much from fears that the speaker is not sincere in his desire to get along with the Soviet Union, as from fears that precisely this line may tempt working class voters to support him rather than the SKDL candidate.

For the Ambassador:

H. Bartlett Wells

H. Bartlett Wells
First Secretary of Embassy

Enclosure:
Translation from "Suomen Sosialidemokraatti", Aug. 8, 1955.

HBWells/jas

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

ACTION COPY - DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

This Document Must Be Returned to DC/R Central Files

FILED AUG 12 1955 mvt JFS HO

611.95

UNCLASSIFIED
(Classification)

TRANSLATION

("Suomen Sosialidemokraatti", August 8, 1955)

Extracts from Rovaniemi Speech of Diet Speaker Fagerholm

Whatever may be our views, personally or as a party, regarding the social system of the Soviet Union, these do not keep us from striving for friendship and collaboration. Here in our country we wish to go on living and doing our part, at the same time preserving our democratic social system. Leading Soviet personalities have repeatedly said that differing social systems can live side by side in peace, and we believe that these assertions have been sincere. We are deeply conscious of the fact that the democracy which has been built up in the North suits us best; under its protection our country has developed into a community having a rather high standard of living and exceptionally extensive social legislation. We have attained these results without giving up personal freedom, which is such an essential part of Northern democracy. All of this does not prevent other people from flourishing and developing under a different sort of social system. Everybody who has visited the Soviet Union knows that in that country, during the existence of the present governmental system, there has been carried out a great work which has forged out of the old feudal community a modern industrial society. We can admire all this, and likewise the mighty labors which have been carried out in the fields of science, art and culture. If despite all this we assert that our people would not accept the social system established there, this statement is still no manifestation of hostility toward the Soviet Union.

The form of our democracy has ancient roots; we have grown up and live from day to day in its atmosphere; to preserve it we have gone through hard battles, and we do not wish to give it up. But, as I have said, we hold fast to the often repeated assertion that differing social systems can live in peace and reciprocal harmony, and on the basis of this point of departure there ought to be every possibility that Finland and the Soviet Union may live on a good basis of neighborly harmony.

Social Democracy desires actively to promote this trend, despite the fact that here at home people so frequently desire to bring our intentions into suspicion. It would be most unfortunate if it were indeed true that only a small part of our people is desirous of good collaboration with the East. In that event endeavors to collaborate would be on shaky ground. Collaboration must first and foremost be based upon those parties and groups within our society which/our country are really of some significance. Otherwise it would not be worth very much.

UNCLASSIFIED